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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

MICROÖRGANISMS ON COINS.—A recent French investigator states that the average Parisian copper has 11,000 bacteria; gold pieces from 1,600 to 3,500; while silver coins have only from 450 to 2,100.

PROGNOSIS AFTER SWALLOWING FOREIGN BODIES.—Fischer reports a case in which a child, ten months old, passed per rectum an open safety pin which had been swallowed about four weeks previously.

TREATMENT OF SEPTIC WOUNDS.—For wounds that are septic or have an offensive discharge, Joseph Mullen, in *The Medical Recorder,* advises dropping twenty drops of 40 per cent. solution of formaldehyde on the dressing three times a day. The effect on the wound is excellent, the dressing does not require such frequent renewal, and the odor of the discharges is eliminated.

TO REMOVE IRON STAINS FROM THE TEETH.—The careful application once only of a solution composed of equal parts of crude hydrochloric acid and distilled water, is said by Combe (*Journal de médecine*) to remove the stains on teeth caused by certain preparations of iron. The solution should be applied by rubbing the teeth lightly with cotton wound around a wooden toothpick which has been dipped in the solution.

THE APPLICATION OF TINCTURE OF IODINE IN THE DARK.—In *The British Medical Journal* J. Dunbar-Brunton describes a peculiar property of iodine.. If the tincture of iodine is painted on the skin in the dark, or is exposed only to a red light, such as is used in photography, and is covered immediately without being exposed to a white light, it will be absorbed with much greater rapidity than under ordinary circumstances, and it is said not to discolor or blister the skin, even if used for long periods.

INFECTIOUSNESS OF WHOOPING COUGH.—*The British Medical Journal* reporting an experiment to determine whether cats are susceptible to whooping cough, says: The conclusions to be drawn from the experiment would seem to be: (1) That whooping cough is beyond doubt an infectious disease. (2) That the specific virus is contained in the sputum or vomited material or both. (3) That infection may take place either during the process of swallowing or by ingestion of the infective agent. (4) That cats are susceptible to whooping cough and may therefore occasionally be the means of disseminating the disease.

METHODS AGAINST FLEAS.—The Medical Record quotes the following from *Science:* L. O. Howard says the following have been recommended: Fill a soup-plate with soapsuds; in the center place a glass of water with a scum of kerosene on top; place the soup-plate on the floor in an infested room, and set fire to the kerosene at night. Fleas in the room will be attracted and will jump into the soapsuds. It is also said that houses may be rendered immune by dissolving alum in the whitewash or kalsomine applied to the interior walls, putting sheets of thick paper that have been dipped in a solution of alum under the floor matting and scattering pulverized alum in all crevices where insects might lodge or breed. Powdered alum may be sprinkled upon carpets already laid and then brushed or swept into their meshes with no injury to the carpets and with the certainty of banishment to many insect pests, including both moths and fleas. Sheets that have been soaked in alum water and then dried may profitably inclose those that are spread nearest to the sleeper.

BABY'S BEDCLOTHES.—An editorial in *The New York Medical Journal* says: There are few parents who are not annoyed and even much disturbed by the persistent kicking off of the bedclothes by the baby and younger children. The performance is variously attributed, according to the training of the parents, to a manifestation of the "old Adam" and to indigestion. The universality of this infantile objection to bedclothing seems to us to point to a radical defect in the clothing itself. It is customary to cover the baby with a cotton sheet, a blanket or two, and a silkolene coverlet lined with cotton batting. These absolutely impervious coverings do not permit a particle of air to pass through, and the respiratory function of the baby's skin is quite inhibited. We suggest that a linen sheet be used to cover the baby, although perhaps a cotton one may be allowed underneath; over this nothing could be better than an old-fashioned knitted comforter, such as is sometimes seen on baby carriages in cases where the baby has an early nineteenth century grandmother who has learned to knit. Such a comforter will be found somewhat costly to purchase, but not so costly, after all, as sundry visits of the physician to take care of a bronchitis or worse; it will admit air, permit the skin to breathe, be light on the baby's delicate body, and look as well as all genuine homemade articles look. If the baby has a normal digestion there will be no kicking off of such covering.

MANUAL LABOR IN PHTHISIS.—*The New York Medical Journal,* quoting from *The Lancet,* says: Paterson gives the results obtained in the tuberculosis sanatorium with which he is connected, of the introduction of manual labor as a part of the routine treatment of patients suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis. The grades of work are summarized as follows: 1. Walking from one half to ten miles daily. 2. Carrying baskets of earth or other material. 3. Using a small shovel. 4. Using a large shovel. 5. Using a pickaxe. 6. Using a pickaxe for six hours a day. Patients in grades two, three, four and five work four hours a day. The various grades are each subdivided into sections. The following points appeared to be determined: Suitably selected patients can be gradually trained to do the hardest laboring work for six hours a day, the result being that their general condition is much improved, whilst some lose both their sputum and tubercle bacilli. Certain patients who do not improve on light work show marked improvement on harder work. Patients who have slightly over exerted themselves and are kept at rest for the few following days are subsequently not only not worse, but may be in their own opinion better. The writer therefore concludes that graduated labor is a definite medical treatment for cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, and raises the general health and resisting power of the patients. The combination of rest, pure air, and overfeeding is not the only treatment for chronic pulmonary tuberculosis. Inman studied the effect of the hard work on the opsonic index of the blood of the patients. His results show that the exercise supplies the stimulus needed to produce artificial autoinoculation, and that its systematic graduation has regulated this in time and amount. With the aid of the opsonic index the stimulus can be regulated with scientific accuracy.